WOMONSPACE NEWS

our voice in the lesbian community

FEBRUARY 1994

The Editor's Valentine's Day Musings

Lindy Pratch

In January, Elaine and I celebrated our ninth anniversary. We marked it quietly, as we always do, with cards and gifts for each other.

Every so often Elaine asks me if I would marry her, and I always say yes. She knows that my answer means, "I will be your partner for life."

Neither of us are serious about going through a public ceremony, however. After so much time together, a wedding seems superfluous. And what form would it take? I wouldn't want any kind of Christian affair, and Elaine would feel silly in the barefoot handfasting that I would choose, so where does that leave us? A compromise might be to simply have a couple of witnesses to the signing of legal papers at city hall. Yes, that would be the answer . . . *if* two women could legally marry.

Instead, our commitment to each other will continue to be a private one, as we treasure our shared life and love.

SUBMISSIONS WANTED!

Letters to the editor, reviews of books, movies or music, artwork, poetry, cartoons, and any other writing of interest to lesbians will make us very happy. We welcome your input! Send your submissions to *Womonspace News*, basement 9930–106 Street, Edmonton, T5K 1C7.

Coming Issues will feature:

March:	Lesbian Authors
April:	Culture, Style and Lesbian Chic
May:	Feminism
June:	Gay Pride
July:	Parenting
August:	The Military

Womonspace News is published by the WOMONSPACE Social and Recreational Society of Edmonton. We are a nonprofit organization. The newsletter is produced by, for, and about lesbians in Edmonton and the surrounding areas. Our purpose is to inform and entertain our members and any other interested lesbians. The opinions expressed in any issue of *Womonspace News* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Directors or the Newsletter Committee. The events, organizations and establishments publicized are not necessarily supported by Womonspace. *Womonspace News* is produced on a volunteer basis by the Newsletter Committee. We welcome submissions. Material submitted becomes the property of Womonspace. We reserve the right to edit for length and content, and to refuse publication. Articles or letters to the editor may be sent to: Womonspace, basement, 9930–106 Street, Edmonton AB T5K 1C7. *Womonspace News* seeks advertising that is lesbian-positive to help defer publication costs. Womonspace does not necessarily endorse products or services offered. We reserve the right to refuse ads. For rate information, and to place an ad, please leave a message on the Lesbian Life Line: 425-0511.

All of Us in Wonderland: How Local Lesbians Hit the Big Time

Karen G

Continued from the January 1994 issue of Womonspace News)

Chapter Two

"But dear. . .," my lover smiles at me tolerantly.

"Hey, don't worry. This is San Francisco. Lotus Land. Sin City. It's okay."

"But *Dear*. . ." My lover tries to pull her hand away from mine.

"It's okay." I grab her hand more tightly. "I know, I've been here before. . .once."

"Dear. . .we are in a *SAFEWAY* store in *SAUSALITO*!"

A blue rinsed matron pushes her buggy past us right into the fruit juice display. My lover leaves to wait in the car.

Later We are off once more, club hopping. Tonight we've chosen Maud's Study; "the established, where-it's-at club for lesbians," our guidebook says.

We arrive at Maud's and slide up to the bar. The place is hopping, no doubt about it. Shrieks and giggles echo from one of the back rooms. The ladies at the pool table have formed a toll gate to the washroom, and one couple is dancing a fox-trot on their table.

"Better than last night, huh dear?"

My lover nods. They have her favourite beer. What else matters?

Suddenly the seat beside me is occupied. I turn to smile and acknowledgment and freeze. The lady beside me is head to toe, in inky black leather. She lets her gaze travel slowly over me and tosses one of her gloves onto the bar. It lands with a clunk. I spring into my lover's lap.

"Hey!" she exclaims, "You're spilling my beer!" She hasn't noticed my neighbour. She makes me go back to my own seat.

I perch nervously beside "Squeaky" and hope she doesn't ask me if I want a bike ride.

Without warning, I am pinched from behind. I jump and turn to see a teenage *boy* running out the door. The pool room patron chase after him. They are all cops. The neighbourhood kids are always a bother, Squeaky tells me. I leave to wait in the car.

NEXT CHAPTER: Handcuffs and Feather Boas–we dress like the natives!

(Originally published in Womonspace News, *March 1983)*

LOVING HER SAFELY

February 12, 1–5 p.m.

AIDS Network

2nd Floor, 11456 Jasper Avenue

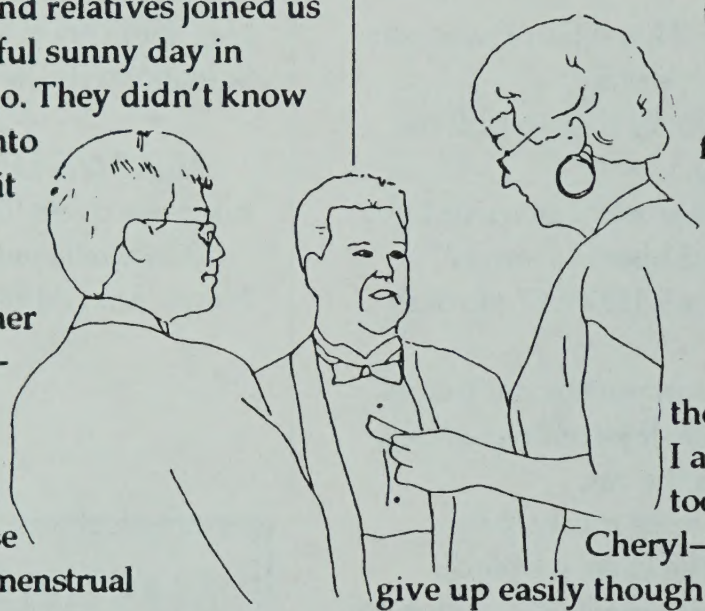
An imaginative afternoon of discussion! Basic AIDS prevention, Safer Sex Techniques, Saran vs Dental Dams and what to do with Embroidery Hoops! All Women are Welcome, singles or couples. Facilitated by Janet and Susan. For more information, and confirmation of attendance, call Janet at 469-6148.

Spiritual Union: Celebrating Our Love

Deb Turner

The thing I remember most about our spiritual union is the hugs. There were hugs hello and hugs good-bye, hugs of thanks and hugs of congratulation. Warm and wonderful hugs. Hugs that would crush a bear. So many people and so much love.

Seventy-five friends and relatives joined us in celebration that beautiful sunny day in September three years ago. They didn't know what they were getting into and neither did we until it all came together.



Who would have guessed we'd see my father dancing with my brother-in-law to wild cheers of delight at the Riverdale hall that evening. Or that nervous-ness would cause my fingers to swell to premenstrual proportions.

All I can say is thank goodness my sweetie has spent years on the volleyball court as a player and a coach. She knew exactly what to do when the ring wouldn't go on and every mouth in the place dropped in horror. One sharp pull on the end of my finger and the swollen knuckle gave way.

Cheryl made it look so simple, but then again she had a lot of practice trying to get that ring on my finger. The first attempt came in December 1985. We'd been together about six months when she suggested we exchange rings as Christmas presents.

We decided to jointly buy a VHS video machine instead–my idea. I just wasn't ready to make the kind of commitment that a ring signifies in our culture. I'd seen too many straight and gay relationships fall apart to trust the vision of "forever" in my partner's eyes.

But as we all know, relationships are about compromise. So I told Cheryl, the woman of my dreams, that if we were together five years we'd give each other rings in a spiritual union witnessed by friends and family.

Of course I never actually believed we'd be together five years when I made that vow. So around the end of our fourth year I started getting nervous. Cheryl wanted to look for rings, which we did, but I hated all of them.

Finally we spotted these rings in Hawaii that I adored and they were too expensive. Poor Cheryl–foiled again. She doesn't give up easily though. Just before Christmas 1990 she spotted the same rings for half the price in West Edmonton Mall.

That was the turning point. There was no going back for either of us then. We'd made a commitment and fate, the Goddess, whatever you want to call it, had lead to its fulfillment. And though I dreaded making a public spectacle of myself I knew it needed to be done, not just for Cheryl, but for myself, our friends and our families.

We decided to ask a friend and former United Church minister from Calgary to perform our spiritual union. He provided us with a number of sample ceremonies used by the Metropolitan Community Church. We

picked bits and pieces from all of them and stitched them together like a patchwork quilt.

Then to add balance and a nontraditional element to our ceremony we asked my aunt Marney, a spiritual leader and healer in her own right, to co-officiate. She lead us through a stirring meditation on the pink rose that truly made the union a spiritual, rather than a religious experience.

Our goal was simple–to have enough traditional imagery that our straight families and friends could understand while at the same time satisfy our need to create something uniquely our own.

In a traditional way we each had a parent give us away to the sound of two beautiful male voices: Rob Sorenson and the late Jordan Rutherford of Calgary. We said vows to one another, exchanged rings and ended the ceremony with a kiss.

But we did it wearing matching tuxedos, not white wedding gowns. And the vows we made were not to love, honour and obey, but to offer our love, strength, support, loyalty, faith and hope in all the changing circumstances of life as long as we both shall live.

When we said those words out loud that day, something changed in both of us. Our love and commitment for one another somehow became deeper and stronger through formalization and official recognition of our relationship. On May 1st we'll be celebrating our ninth anniversary.

Saying "I do" in Northern Europe

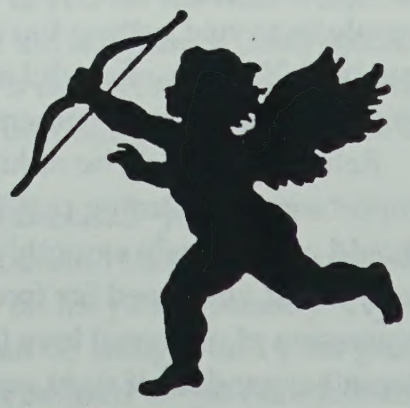
Same-sex marriages are legal in Denmark and in Norway.

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

C ★ O ★ N ★ T ★ E ★ S ★ T

Rules:

1) Deadline for submissions is 4 p.m., March 31, 1994.
2) Winning entry will be used for the upcoming t-shirts, posters, and for the logo advertising our 1994 march.
3) The year (1994) and the words (Take Back the Night) must appear. "Edmonton" is optional. Any other words or pictures are up to the designer.
4) Original submissions must be made on 11x17 paper in black and white.
5) Contest is open to women of all ages.
6) One prize of $50.00 will be given to the winning entrant. Public acknowledgment of the artist's contribution to our cause will also be provided.
7) Please submit a cover letter with your artwork. It must include: your name, address and telephone number.
8) If you have any questions, please contact Valerie at 438-1141 (h) or 451-0315 (w).
9) Please mail or drop off you submission to 710, 10240–124 Street, Edmonton AB, T5N 3W5.



The Valentine's Cake Recipe

Coco

Since it is the Valentine issue, I decided to contribute something that is both romantic and delicious. Are there any romantics left out there? Or have you all become cynical and jaded with the heartache and longing that tends to be entwined with romance? Well my contribu-tion is by no means a cure, but it may offer some enjoyment for a while. More over, it can be enjoyed by singles and couples alike (providing you are not allergic to chocolate). So here it is, The Valentine's Cake Recipe created by S. Tenaglia and L. Crowther.

This recipe is a bit time-consuming but the results are well worth the effort. There are four parts:

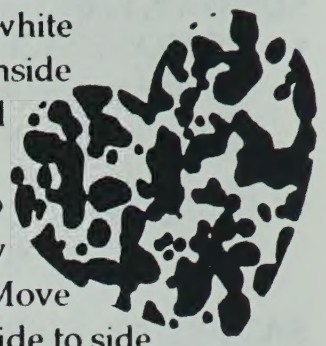
1. A chocolate heart lid
2. A chocolate cake and icing
3. Berry filling
4. Putting it all together

To make the lid you are going to need a bottomless heart-shaped cake pan.

Chocolate Heart Lid

3 ounces imported white chocolate (chopped)
3 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate (chopped)

Cut heart-shaped piece of waxed paper about 4 inches larger than $8^1/_2$ inch heart-shaped cake pan. Place on cookie sheet. Lightly oil inside of pan with vegetable oil. Butter out-side of pan. Put pan on paper which is on the cookie sheet. Press waxed paper up on to outsides of buttered pan to adhere to prevent chocolate from leaking out. Place white choc-olate in bowl. Put bowl over saucepan of simmering water; stir until smooth. Remove from over water. Drop white chocolate by spoonfuls inside heart, spacing apart and allowing some to touch inner edge of pan. Drop bittersweet chocolate by spoonfuls into spaces. Move heart pan gently from side to side to distribute choco-late evenly and fill in heart completely. Swirl mixtures together using tip of knife. Freeze until firm (about 20 minutes). Run small sharp knife around outside of pan to loosen chocolate. Remove pan. Refrigerate chocolate lid until ready to use. The lid can be prepared one week ahead. Cover with plastic wrap.



Cake

1 cup brown sugar	1 tsp baking soda
$^1/_2$ cup butter	3 tbsp cocoa
1 tbsp corn syrup	$^1/_8$ tsp salt
2 eggs	1 cup cold water
$1^1/_2$ cups flour	1 tsp vanilla
2 tsp baking powder	

Cream together sugar, butter, syrup, and eggs. In a separate bowl combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, cocoa and salt. Add dry ingredients, alternately with cold water, to the creamed mixture. Stir in vanilla. Beat well. Pour batter into a greased 9" (23 cm.) square pan. Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 30 minutes or until an inserted tooth-pick comes out clean. When cool, frost with icing.

Icing

2 tbsp cocoa	2 tbsp milk
2 tbsp melted butter	1 cup icing sugar

Combine all ingredients and mix well.

Filling
1 cup strawberries
1 cup raspberries

Putting It All Together
Cut cake in half using serrated knife. Spread icing on the bottom half of the cake. Replace the top half of the cake. Spread the icing all over the cake. Place the raspberries and strawberries on top of the cake. Place the chocolate lid on top of the berries. To serve the cake, remove the lid and break into small pieces. Cut the cake and serve some of the chocolate lid with each piece.
Enjoy!

The Choir that Won't Shut Up

Catherine Reininger

Edmonton Vocal Minority is a multi-talented group of primarily lesbian and gay people who sing choral music, and they do it wonderfully. Ranging in age from fifteen to sixty, they come from all walks of life to sing jazz, love songs, and tunes from musicals. They also sing music commissioned by The Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALAC). GALAC is an international alliance of women's, men's, and mixed choruses dedicated to providing support and inspiration to lesbians and gays through excellence in choral arts. GALAC can be truly proud of Edmonton Vocal Minority.

A reincarnation of a choir by the same name from the early 1980's, eleven singers came together in November 1992 to sing with Calgary's Rocky Mountain Singers, who came to Edmonton to do a benefit concert for the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre. By June of 1993, membership in Edmonton Vocal Minority had increased to thirty-three, and their performance was impressive. Today the choir numbers more than fifty and is open to anyone who wants to sing. While the membership is primarily lesbian or gay, many others have joined to share the experience.

The quality of the singing is due to the hard work and commitment of the choir members themselves, but also to the very impressive talents of both its conductor, David, and accompanist, Kirk.

The music transcends all boundaries and all personal goals. The performances are powerful and magnificent, and while Edmonton Vocal Minority was organized as a creative outlet to empower its members, and the lesbian and gay community, it does far more. It enriches all who listen. The music is wonderful. It empowers us all.

If you have not heard Edmonton Vocal Minority perform, there are a number of opportunities in 1994. In the coming year they will be presenting four concerts, all in Convocation Hall at the University of Alberta, Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Feb. 19:	Love à la Carte
Apr. 23:	EVM presents JUBA!
June 25:	Voices of Pride
July 2:	EVM presents San Diego Men's Chorus

Subscriptions: Regular $32; Low income $20
Single ticket prices: Regular $10 in advance, $12 at the door; Low Income $8 in advance, $12 at the door. Subscribe! For further information, phone 424-1561.

Don't kid yourself girl

When you think you've held her long enough
Don't kid yourself girl
Hold her a lot longer.

When you've made that promise,
keep it.

Just when you think you understand
her needs,
pains,
disappointments.
Read in between the lines
Caress her, hold her tighter.

All those little things
that drive you nuts; you know them.
Well, how nuts will you be without her.

Spoken way too many times
felt by way too may women,
"One is such a lonely number."

So don't kid yourself girl
You may be the next to join
the land of the lonely.
As she waits . .

Say it, I need, love you.
feel it, share in her joys.
show it, listen to her.
keep it, appreciate her.

Don't kid yourself girl.

C. A. M.

Children's Christmas Party

Shirl

On December 12, I was delighted to be at the kids' Christmas party at The Roost. The 35–40 kids had a blast playing pool, foozeball, ring toss and pinball. The most fun was at the karaoke machine. To be able to grab a microphone, dance on a real stage and hear their own voice was a thrill that just doesn't happen everyday. Santa rolled in and the squeals of delight were hilarious.

The Prom Queen Entertainment Group put on this gig. This was a totally non-profit function. The food, decorations, and presents all came from them. Everything was just GREAT! The time, energy and expense of such an affair must have been tremendous and I am sure that the parents who brought their kids will join me in a big thank you.

Woman to Womon
BOOKS

106, 12404–114 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5M 3M5 (403) 454-8031

The new catalogue is now available featuring a large selection of lesbian fiction and non-fiction, CDs and tapes, lesbian and feminist magazines and newsletters.

Woman to Womon Books is a feminist and lesbian mail-order book business serving Western Canada

BETWEEN THE COVERS

Books available at the Edmonton Public Library

Lindy Pratch

Lesbian and Gay Marriage : Private Commitments, Public Ceremonies. Edited by Suzanne Sherman, Temple University Press,1992.

Lesbian and Gay Marriage is divided into four parts. First comes "The Marriage Debate:" two opposing views on whether or not gay people should marry. The second section contains the stories of nine couples who are in long-term relationships, but have never felt the need for a public ceremony. The third part has interviews of fifteen gay or lesbian couples who have gone through wedding or affirmation ceremonies to publicly declare their commitment to each other. Viewpoints of clergy who have officiated at same-sex marriages make up the final chapter.

Some characteristics unique to gay and lesbian culture emerge from these interviews. "Unlike heterosexual couples, it seems common for lesbians and gay men to celebrate their original anniversary–whether the date of first meeting, their first kiss, or moving in together–instead of the *wedding* anniversary. Couples who celebrate both dates tend to consider the original anniversary the real one." Also, same-sex couples tend to have been together for a much longer time than straight couples when they marry. Because of that, the clergy feel that same-sex weddings are more often true celebrations of love.

This is a thought provoking book, recommended to anyone who has pondered the issue of lesbian marriage.

On Intimate Terms : The Psychology of Difference in Lesbian Relationships. Beverly Burch, University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Instead of comparing lesbian relationships to heterosexual ones, Beverly Burch explores the psychology of how women interact with women. If opposites attract, what constitutes a complementary partner for a lesbian? Another book to provoke thought.

Two more titles to look for are: *Permanent Partners : Building Gay and Lesbian Relationships that Last.* Betty Berzon, Dutton, 1988 and*The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook : Creating and Raising Our Families.* April Martin, Harper Perennial, 1993.

Hawaiian Honeymoons

Hawaii may soon become a honeymoon destination for lesbians and gay men. A ruling favouring same-sex marriages is expected to be passed in 1994.

BOYSTOWN CAFÉ GALLERY

10116–124 Street

Coco

Boystown Café Gallery has become quite a popular meeting place for members of Edmonton's lesbian and gay community. The ambiance of the café is relaxed and comfortable. Moreover, the space is conducive to a variety of events. These can range from hanging out with friends to hanging out alone while enjoying some coffee or tea. Boystown is also a great place to have meetings. They have great round wooden tables that are perfect for a small meeting. In fact, our newsletter committee meets there quite regularly.

The café is quite spacious, holds seventeen tables and is divided into smoking and non-smoking sections. There is also a rotating display of paintings and photographs created by various local artists. The art exhibits change on a monthly basis. Those of you who are artistically inclined can contact Dwight at Boystown to inquire about getting your work displayed.

Boystown offers standard café fare such as lattés, cappuccino, expresso, etc. They also serve tortes, cheesecakes and delicious baked goods such as muffins and cinnamon buns. In addition, light lunches are served. The menu includes soups, salads, sandwiches, and quiches. I have only tried the turkey sandwich and the quiche. Both were excellent.

As well as the food, drink and art, Boystown provides a wonderful array of reading materials on their shelves. They carry the majority of gay magazines such as *Deneuve, Angles, Extra, The Advocate, Out, Genre* and *Ten Percent*. The local gay press is also available. This includes the magazine *Clue* from Calgary and *Times.10* which is published in Edmonton.

An additional benefit of Boystown is the large community billboard that is situated in the entry way. This is a good source of information about events and programs that are happening in the lesbian and gay community.

Boystown Café Gallery was established on February 14, 1992. Owners Dwight Clarkson and Jack Der wanted to provide another social place for the community to go. Moreover, they wanted the place to be non-alcoholic and provide an alternate venue to the bars. Clarkson says that though the Café is called Boystown, it is for all of the gay community. He welcomes and would like to see more members of the lesbian community at the café.

Are you getting *Womonspace News* in the mail? If not, then SUBSCRIBE! Become a member of Womonspace and show your support for the lesbian community!

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

A newsletter and advertising policy has been approved by the Board (see the inside front cover of this issue for details). The price of a business card size ad will be $12/issue. Womonspace members are entitled to one free business card size ad per year. Classified advertising is free (up to three lines), so do give us a call if you have an ad to place (425-0511). The co-sponsoring of Womonspace dances was discussed. Details of our policy will published in the next newsletter.

Results of the survey circulated at the Volunteer Social in November will be discussed at the next general meeting, February 6. Interest was shown in a wide variety of activities, including workshops, a car rally, games nights, film nights, canasta, hay rides, ski trips and coffee houses. Remember that if any of these events are to happen, we need women who will organize them! Why not come down to the next meeting and offer your services?

Another topic to be discussed in February is that of vacant board positions. We need a president, a secretary, and an events coordinator.

CLASSIFIEDS

Roomate wanted to share furnished house, double car garage, Strathearn area, $275/mo. plus utilities. Phone Deanna, 465-7513.

WOMONSPACE DANCE

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19
8:00 P.M.–1 A.M.
BONNIE DOON HALL
9240–93 STREET

WOMONSPACE 1994 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Basement, 9930–106 Street Edmonton AB T5K 1C7 Phone: 425-0511

Confidentiality Assured

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY/PROV _____

POSTAL CODE _____ PHONE _____

Membership Fee: $15.00 Cheque or Money Order payable to Womonspace (low income available)

New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ I would like to be a volunteer ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please mail my newsletter to my home ☐

I will pick up the newsletter at dances/events ☐ **Total enclosed $**_____